GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Prepared Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)
General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

for

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Education

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GYPSY FLOWER GIRLS: RUMANIA

The gypsies are very numerous in Rumania, and like most of their brethern the world over, they are none too fond of work. Consequently they are seldom found in any of the steady manual occupations, as they prefer to be flower-sellers, musicians, peddlers, or to follow any employment which permits them to cling to their traditional vagabond existence.

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Gaza: A Port of the Desert

CHURCHMEN and archaeologists alike were shocked when dispatches told how Gaza, Palestine, was shell riddled and half destroyed, like a war-ravaged city of France, by the fierce fighting which restored the Holy Land to Christian dominion.

Deep as may be the regret that present-day Gaza has been injured, yet there is no indication that the Gaza which once was the Liverpool of Philistia, and later the St. Louis of Palestine, has been damaged.

Modern Gaza is set upon a hill, some 100 feet above the surrounding sand dunes and verdant garden spots. It is the hill, and not the present city, which has yielded some of the richest treasures of recent Assyrian study.

The fortunes of geography laid Gaza open to the misfortunes of war. Not only was the ancient city the focus of all the sea roads of the days when the Mediterranean encompassed the civilized world's commerce, but it was nicknamed "the port of the desert." It was on the edge of a sea of sand, depot of the freight-laden caravans between Egypt, Babylonia and Arabia; provisioning point, too, for the Bedouins, Captain Kidds of the rolling desert.

Its Census Figures Cover Thousands of Years

Gaza, in 1914, had about 40,000 people, considerably fewer than it had 2,000 years ago, but the number represented a rapid growth for an eastern city, since it was but a straggling village of 2,000 in 1840, and had but 15,000 a half century ago.

Its site has been hallowed by the passing of nearly 4,000 years of recorded history, and while "the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza" may have seemed a considerable journey to Philip, Gaza is but a little farther to the southwest of Jerusalem than Washington is from Baltimore.

Today the city is three miles removed from the sea, and for a long time it was thought that after its destruction by Alexander Jannaeus, a Jewish Richard III of a century before Christ's time, it had been rebuilt at a new site. Researches show it to be more probable that the ancient "Damascus of the South" extended from the site of the modern city to the sea. No Arnold Bennett lived to make the life of the "five towns," a Philistine league of cities that included Gaza, vivid to future generations of readers, but Herodotus, the Greek Macaulay, acclaimed it equal to Sardis.

Hill Recalls Story of Samson

Residents in Gaza will show the visitor Samson's tomb. The tradition of his burial there is unfounded, but there is more reason for believing that a bare, isolated knoll to the south of the city, is the hill "before Hebron" to which the strong man carried the "doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts."

So important was Gaza during the second millenium before Christ that it

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A RACING CAMEL WITH HIS OWNERS

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Bird's-eye View of Japan's History

WHAT manner of folk are the Japanese?"

"What sort of Gods do they worship?"

"What kind of laws do they have?"

These are a few of the questions the western world is asking in view of the universal interest aroused in Japan's controversy with China about the Shantung concession and the presence of Japanese troops in Siberia.

Baron Kentaro Kaneko, before the World War gave rise to these controversial questions, wrote for the National Geographic Magazine an article from which the following is taken:

"The Japanese have a peculiar character. When they come in contact with a foreign civilization they always go through three stages of evolution. First, they pass through the stage of imitation. At this period they imitate everything that comes from a foreign source, and I might say that they blindly copy. But after some years of imitation they arrive at the stage of adaptation; then at last they reach the stage of origination. These three stages are clearly shown by our history, if we only examine the inner workings of the Japanese mind.

At First Japan Copied Everything Chinese

"About 1,500 years ago, when we introduced the Chinese civilization into our country, we copied everything after Chinese fashion. At that time we had no national alphabet. There were some sorts of signs to express ideas in writing, and even these signs differed in different parts of the country. The Chinese had a highly developed type of hieroglyphics to express their ideas; therefore at one time the Chinese hieroglyphics took such a hold on the mind of the Japanese that we adopted them as our national language.

"This period might be called the era of imitation. Fortunately there came a scholar—the most famous scholar we ever had—by the name of Mabie, who returned from China in 735 A. D. He was in China many years for his education at Chinese schools. When he came back he saw what was most needed in his native country, and he invented out of the Chinese hieroglyphics the forty-seven characters of our alphabet, founded upon the principle of phonetic language. As you know, the Japanese language is phonetic, whereas the Chinese is hieroglyphic.

"We have passed through three stages in our religion just as much as in our literature.

Korea Gave Buddhism to Japan

"Buddhism was first introduced into Japan through Korea in the year 552 A. D. At first Buddhism was embraced by the higher classes, particularly among scholarly circles, but the lower classes, or common people still clung to their old faith of Shintoism. Those who believed in Buddhism went so far as to copy the ceremonies and ritualisms. The doctrine of Buddhism was

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then served as a barometer of world history. The nation that dominated the restricted "world" of that time held Gaza. Consequently Thothmes III reached out for it at about the same date, B. C., that Columbus discovered America, A. D.

As Egypt passed the apex of her glory, a sturdy people with a higher material culture, but none of the moral grandeur of Israel, widened their sphere of influence, and for a time Gaza became conspicuous in Philistine history. It was in Samson's time that a sort of guerrilla warfare between the Israelites and the Philistines began, such as that exemplified when he tied the firebrand to the foxes' tails and sent them scurrying, like modern Zeppelins, among the grain fields and vineyards of the enemy.

An Ancient Apostle of "Kultur"

The city was under Hezekiah, of Judah, for only a brief time, if at all. With the rise of the Assyrian kingdom attempts were made to subdue Gaza, which for a short time were resisted, but by the seventh century, B. C., it had become a vassal of that early war lord and art patron, Assurbanipal, and also it is mentioned in the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III, who bolstered his autocracy by a bureaucratic system, and deported conquered peoples as he spread Assyrian "Kultur" by the sword.

Gaza's strategic military position is well illustrated by its resistance, for five months, to Alexander the Great. After it was razed by Jannaeus it was more than a century before it was rebuilt, and by the second century, A. D., it had become a Greek city of high rank. It was a stronghold of Neoplatonism, the last of the pagan philosophies to give way before Christianity, which was not accepted officially in Gaza until the fifth century, A. D. For 200 years thereafter Gaza was renowned for its learninig. It passed then to Moslem hands, figured only slightly in the Crusades, and finally was captured by the Moslems in 1244, to remain in Turkish possession, except for a slight respite when it was captured by Napoleon in 1799, until General Allenby's victorious entry.

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Germany's Reduced Place Under the Sun

TO picture the new map of Europe, one may start with Germany, noting the territorial losses she suffered in her fateful effort to find a "new place under the sun."

Germany's lost areas include: Alsace and Lorraine, 5,600 square miles, restored to France; Eupen and Malmedy, 382 square miles, ceded to Belgium; parts of Posen, Silesia and West Prussia, in all about 27,686 miles, awarded to Poland.

In addition there are the internationalized areas of the Danzig region, 729 square miles, and the Saar Basin, 738 square miles, the latter to be governed by a commission pending a plebiscite 15 years hence. Plebiscites also are provided for parts of Schleswig, aggregating 2,787 square miles, and for 5,785 miles in the southeastern third of East Prussia. (For pre-war German states see "The Germany That Was: A Political Crazy Quilt," in Geographic News Bulletin for October 20, 1919).

Germany Smaller Than Texas at the Start

To visualize more clearly what Germany lost in territory take a map of the United States and from the area of Texas deduct that of Michigan. This may be done, roughly, by eliminating the panhandle and that western rectangle beyond the Rio Grande, which has El Paso in the northwest corner. The result will be an area approximately the size of the continental German Empire before the armistice was signed.

From this area Germany loses outright her ill-gotten Alsace-Lorraine, parts of Silesia, Posen, and West Prussia, the Danzig area, Eupen and Malmedy. This aggregate loss in territory is about equivalent to the area of the State of Maine.

But that is not all. In addition there are areas in which a plebiscite is to be taken. Their total extent is about equivalent to the area of the State of New Hampshire. They include the southeastern third of East Prussia, part of Schleswig, and the Saar Valley. Even before the war it is likely that a plebiscite would have found strong anti-German support in each of these areas. After the war, when the choice is between tax-burdened Germany and some other power, there would seem to be little doubt but that the Saar regions will prefer France, Schleswig will revert to Denmark, and the East Prussian area to Poland.

Of course these comparisons do not mark the complete losses of Germany, for they do not take into account the colonies which are taken from her. Henceforth other nations, as mandatories, will administer Kamerun, Togoland, German Southwest and German East Africa, Tsingtau, German New Guinea, the Caroline and the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Pleasant Island.

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written in the Chinese language, and the believers offered their prayers in that tongue.

"At one time Buddhism made such a stride as to become almost a state religion, but the common people still opposed it, with a determination to uphold their own Shintoism. Consequently a most terrible struggle began between the two religions—Buddhism in the hands of the upper classes and Shintoism in the hearts of the common people. Such a contest as this blocked every step in Japan's progress, but finally the statesmen and priests began to understand that they no longer could force upon the people a blind imitation of Buddhism, and they changed their policy and tried to find out some means to meet the requirements of the time.

"They invented an ingenious theory of explaining and interpreting the religious principle of Buddhism. They adapted the theory of Monotheism as well as Polytheism by saying that there is only one Supreme Power, which is personified in the form of various gods and goddesses, according to the different countries and different institutions. Thus they reconcile the principle of the one Supreme Power in Buddhism with the Polytheistic theory of Shintoism.

"In order to convince the popular mind of this theory Emperor Shomu patronized a movement to erect a large bronze statue of Daibutsu or Buddha at Nara, and this statue was erected in 752 A. D., after fourteen years in casting and construction.

Same Stages Marked in Government

"In the sphere of government and law we find the same three stages of evolution. After the introduction of Chinese civilization our governmental organization was moulded after the fashion of the governmental system of the To dynasty of China.

"In the year 701 A. D., we reorganized the departments of our government in accordance with the principles and forms of the Chinese system, and adopted the Chinese law in every branch of our national affairs.

"But the Hojo dynasty, the second military Shogunate of Japan's feudalism, discovered the weakness and defects in the laws of Taiho, because the laws of a foreign country could never be executed in toto, for the simple reason that every nation has traditional laws of its own which every lawgiver must not disregard. Therefore Takatoki Hojo, a great statesman, investigated the old customs and traditions of Japan and modified the Chinese-imitation laws of the Taiho era so as to meet the requirements of the country.

"This modification is found in a compilation of the customs and traditions of old Japan, which was promulgated in the fifty articles of Teiyei era (1232 A. D.). This is something like the Justinian Roman laws compiled in the reign of Emperor Justinian. This period we call the era of adaptation in our legal evolution.

"We began to reorganize our country in 1868. Since the imperial restoration we have studied the systems of government of the United States and European countries. As you have divided your government into different departments, we divided our government into similar departments. We adopted a compulsory system of national education, exactly on the same plan as your common-school system, of eight years of compulsory education. A boy and girl must attend school as soon as they attain the age of six, and remain there until the age of fourteen."

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Arabia: Alsace-Lorraine of the Near East

TWELVE per cent of all the people in the world take their rules of conduct and laws of life from Mecca, and have a keen, personal interest in all that happens in Arabia, and to Arabia.

That is why the complicated problem of Arabia's disposition portends so much to the future peace of the world. Frederick Simpich, in a communication to the National Geographic Society, says:

"In physical character, flora, and fauna, Arabia is more like Africa than Asia. In shape, it is almost a triangle, and it runs from northwest to southeast. It is bounded on the east, south, and west by the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea, respectively; on the north it joins Syria. As Josephus of old wrote, 'Arabia is a country that joins on Judea.' And Roman geographers drew a map of Arabia that included Mesopotamia and the Syrian desert back of Palestine.

"The length of the peninsula from the head of the Gulf of Akabah to the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, near Aden, is about 1,300 miles; its greatest breadth, in latitude 23 degrees north, from the Red Sea coast on the west to Ras-al-Hadd on the east, is about 1,500 miles.

Coast Like That of Lower California

"As one sails along the Red Sea coast of Arabia, with the low—2,000 feet high—dry and barren mountains lying just back of sandy, empty strips of country, he is reminded of the Pacific side of Lower California above Cape San Lucas. Many small islands, hot and dry and uninhabited except for half-wild bands of tramp fishermen, dot the map along this coast. One of these, called Perim, near the mouth of Bab-el-Mandab Straits, is occupied by a British garrison.

"The southeastern coast, similarly empty and marked by sharp, jagged rocks thrust up from glistening sand beds, is broken by several good harbors, like that at Aden. This latter port is a British possession, not unlike Gibraltar. It is heavily fortified and is the entrepot of commerce between India and Europe.

"The Persian Gulf coast country is somewhat more cheerful, cultivated here and there, and sloping down to salt water from the high, slightly forested Jebel Akdar or Green Mountains.

"Famous old Maskat, once the haunt of Sinbad the Sailor and later the stronghold of the Portuguese buccaneers, clings to the hot rocks inside Maskat harbor, and is the romantic capital of old Oman, an independent principality with a sultan all its own.

"Oman has been practically under British protection for many years, and though an integral part of the Arabian peninsula, can hardly be called a part of Arabia.

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A Comparison With Eastern States

If you are more familiar with eastern States than with Texas, it may make the comparison more vivid to note that the post-war Germany will find her place under the sun to be about equal to the territory comprised in the New England States plus New York and Pennsylvania, or that contained in New England and Oregon.

On her pre-war area equal to Texas minus Michigan, or Texas minus all the New England States except Connecticut, Germany supported some seventy million people, nearly two-thirds the total population of the United States of America. How much of this population is removed from her it is difficult to say, because the splitting of territory does not correspond to units of census measurement.

But it is possible to arrive at a fairly accurate estimate of her reduced population. For Germany's citizens were distributed well over her former empire, and countless small cities and towns, and a dense rural population, rather than numerous large cities, made her average density of population high.

This average density was about 300 to the square mile in 1914, and the total number of square miles either lost outright or subject to plebiscites at some future date approaches 45,000 square miles. Therefore it is not far from the mark to estimate that Germany loses a number of persons equivalent to the combined populations of New York State and Massachusetts, including those giant New World cities, New York and Boston.

Lost Richest Coal Fields in Europe

Grievous as may have been the parting to her, Germany expected to lose Alsace and Lorraine if she lost the war. But to pay for her capital crimes against civilization with the Saar Valley area was a heavy price. For in that region, not so large as Rhode Island, were contained coal fields rated among the richest in Europe. In this historic area of natural bounty the earth has borne grapes of luscious flavor since Roman days. Then the surface was pierced for its yield of black treasure, though wooded hills, crowned with ancient abbeys and castles, still look down on busy factories and bustling towns. It was the eastern Pennsylvania of Germany—only with the Pittsburgh left out—for Saarbrucken, metropolis of the area, has only about 30,000 population.

Not only was the Saar coal of industrial importance to Germany, but some of it was diverted to Italy and Switzerland, a sort of "underground propaganda" against the day when Germany should need their support.

Danzig has been a port of major importance since the days when it was one of four principal centers of the Hanseatic League. Not far inland is Marienburg, once the capital of the Teutonic Order of Knights. Formerly the grain of fertile Silesia and Poland poured through Danzig, but more recently the city has been a center for ship building and manufacture of munitions.

Kicking Hard Against the Pricks

Ever since the armistice Germany has carried on an assiduous propaganda to keep from losing her rich Posen and Silesian mining districts. Zinc, iron and potash, the very life-blood of her vaunted industrial organism, come from the area adjoining Poland, which Germany now is called upon to forfeit to that newly created nation so long debarred from this rightful inheritance. Hard coal also came from this region in considerable quantity.

By granting a plebiscite to Schleswig (which is to be taken successively in three areas) Germany is likely to lose a province which has not the industrial importance of the Saar or Silesian districts, but which has a naval value relating to both the North and Baltic Seas. Moreover, Germany prized this region because it was so hard to acquire. No Balkan problem is more complex, nor did the Alsace-Lorraine issue cause more irritation than did the so-called Schleswig-Holstein question in years gone by. One historian remarked that only three men ever understood the points at issue and one was dead, another insane, and a third had forgotten what it was all about.

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"Hopping Off" Nova Scotia to Make Argentina

AMAZING as are the recent flights of aeroplanes across the Atlantic, aviators must fly farther and do it more frequently to warrant a literal appellation of "bird men." For example, the golden plover summers in the Arctic and winters in Argentina.

In a communication to The National Geographic Society a noted naturalist describes the perennial aerial tour of "our greatest traveler" as follows:

"This species nests along the Arctic coast of North America, and as soon as the young are old enough to care for themselves fall migration is begun by a trip to the Labrador coast, where the plover fattens for several weeks on the abundant native fruits. A short trip across the Gulf of St. Lawrence brings it to Nova Scotia, the starting point for its extraordinary ocean flight, due south to the coast of South America.

"The golden plover takes a straight course across the ocean, and if the weather is propitious, makes the whole 2,400 miles without pause or rest. But if tempests arise, it may be blown out of its course to the New England coast and start anew on the advent of fair weather; or it may rest for a few days at the Bermudas, one-third of the way along its course, or at the nearest of the Lesser Antilles, still 600 miles from the mainland of South America. These, however, are emergency stop-overs, to be resorted to only in case of storms. Having accomplished its ocean voyage, it passes across eastern South America to its winter home in Argentina.

"After a six months' vacation here, the plover finds its way back to the Arctic by an entirely different route. It travels across northwestern South America and the Gulf of Mexico, reaching the United States along the coasts of Louisiana and Texas. Thence it moves slowly up the Mississippi Valley and by early June is again at the nesting site on the Arctic coast. Its round-trip has taken the form of an enormous ellipse, with a minor axis of 2,000 miles and a major axis stretching 11,000 miles from Arctic America to Argentina."

Bulletin No. 5, February 16, 1920.

A Land of Figs, Spices and Dates

"Along the Red Sea coast lie three provinces, the most important in Arabia. Yemen, the most southerly and most populous, has many arable valleys, producing coffee, figs, spices, hides, and dates. It has two port cities, Mocha and Hodeida. Aseer province lies north of Yemen, and north of Aseer and extending to the Suez Canal stretches the province of Hejaz, wherein lie the famous Moslem cities of Mecca and Medina.

"The ancients, for convenience, or from lack of geographic knowledge, divided Arabia into three parts—the Stony, the Desert, and the Happy. Our knowledge of its map shows most of its high interior plateau occupied (except for Nejd province) by four great deserts, the Syrian, the Nefud, the Ahkaf, and the Dehna.

"The Mahrah and Hadramaut provinces, stretching for hundreds of miles above Aden, are unmapped and practically unknown.

"Nejd, the great interior province, is declared by Arabs to be the birthplace of their most cherished institutions and traditions.

"Hasa province, at the head of the Persian Gulf, and Koweit, its busy port, from which many cargoes of dates, sponges, and a wealth of pearls are shipped, is no doubt destined to see great commercial development in connection with Great Britain's activities in Mesopotamia.

"The Germans had selected Koweit as the salt-water terminus of their famous Bagdad railway, but the British, by a clever coup a decade ago, made a treaty with the Sheik of Koweit and blocked the Kaiser's plan for a railway port on the Persian Gulf."

Bulletin No. 4, February 16, 1920.

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Rumania: Where Clothes Help Make the Man—And Women Make the Clothes

WHEN German and Bulgarian looters carried away the clothes of the Rumanian populace they did more than put a people to a temporary inconvenience; it was as if a war veteran were robbed of his uniform, or a matron of her bridal gown.

Especially was this loss felt by women. In a communication to the National Geographic Society, James Howard Gore explains the Rumanians' devotion to their historic costume as follows:

"In no part of Europe do the peasants hold so tenaciously to their distinctive costume as in the uplands of Rumania. It is, in fact, almost an asset in nationalism, and its unifying influence was emphasized some years ago by the Dowager Queen, when she herself put on the native dress.

"Some of the outdoor work is almost wholly in the hands of the woman. She takes the hemp and the flax from the seed to the finished garment, and deems herself fortunate if the husband plows the ground for her. As the spinning and weaving is done by the women, the clothing worn by the family are tangible evidences of the taste and industry of the women folk.

"To wear store-made clothes was regarded, until recent times, as a token of indolence or awkwardness on the part of the females of the family—characteristics that are the butt of most of the jokes improvised by the leader of the Sunday village dance.

"The most important thing about the costume is the fact that it is entirely made at home by hand, so that the dress exemplifies both the taste and the skill of its owner, and gives to the mate-hunting swain an index to these all-important qualities.

"All who have visited Rumania have caught the vision of some of the peasant women met by the roadside. It will be recalled that they are the fairest among their neighbors, and that this natural gift is most apparent under conditions best calculated for its preservation. Their dress is varied and elaborate. The foundation is a sort of shift, reaching to the ankle, the upper part embroidered with colored cotton, usually red or black. Over this is a petticoat, which in its material and detail, reflects the taste and buying power of the weaver.

"On her head the peasant woman wears a scarf of cotton tissue with silk stripes, if her means permit, and on gala occasions she puts on a brighter kerchief, ornamented with a fringe or a row of spangles.

"Both men and women seem partial to having their heads covered, even in the house, but it is not regarded as proper to eat without removing the hat."

Bulletin No. 6, February 16, 1920.

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